

## **KNU Letter of Felicitation to Karen Traditional Wrist-Tying Ceremony**

*25 Aug 2011*

The full moon day of Wagaung Month of the year 2750 (Karen Era), which falls on August 14, 2011 (AD), is the day on which the Karen traditional wrist-tying ceremony is held. We, the KNU, extend best wishes to the entire Karen people to have peace of mind and the best of health, to be able to earn a good living free from dangers and strife.

As it is an auspicious day on which the Karen people in various places gather together to receive blessings, we would like to cheer and urge our own people as follows.

Dear the Entire Karen People,

As you, beloved brothers and sisters, all know that the successive chauvinist military dictatorships as well as the present military-supported new government impose oppressive rule and suppress our rights, even though we are a leading people in this country. The constitution the present government is enforcing does not have any guarantee for the non-Burman ethnic nationalities. We are facing a situation where we do not have the right to freely and widely propagate our language, literature, culture, customs and traditions, and we exist as if on the permission and orders of the dictatorships. We do not have the freedom and rights to exercise human rights, political rights and economic rights, and the other ethnic nationalities are facing the same situation just like us.

After the election, a government supposed be a civilian government was formed. However, it is not a civilian government, though the military men have changed into civilian garbs, it has not changed the system of military dictatorship. As there is still military offensive in Karen land, Kawthoolei, the Burma Army troops are still committing widespread forced labor, extortion, the arrest, torture and execution of the innocent civilians, the use of civilians as human shield in the frontline areas etc. These atrocities are happening now. They have happened through out the ages also. As this new Burmese government launches military offensives in the Kachin and Shan states, the people in those states have to flee and hide in deep jungles and mountains, becoming refugees in their own lands. All the Karen people should note that the new government has not changed, evidently in any way, and it is still practicing the system of dictatorship to commit crimes starting from elimination of the ethnic cultures to the genocide of the ethnic nationalities.

Dear the Entire Karen People,

We really need unity of the Karen people. The ill-treatment of a Karen means ill-treatment of the entire Karen nation. The needed unity of the Karen people is the support and cooperation for the liberation of the entire Karen people. It is especially necessary for the new generation youths to participate and cooperate in the national and political movement. The Karen revolutionary resistance, which is the Karen national movement, is for the emancipation of the entire Karen nation from the oppressive rule of the military dictatorship. As the entire Karen people are suffering, this movement is the duty of the entire Karen nation as well as that of each individual Karen. As we are a people, we should have our birthrights, freedom, rights of equality and the rights to develop our own life and destiny. However, we have not gained these rights. In order to regain these rights, we must all cooperate and fight.

Dear the Entire Karen People,

Due to the unjust rule of the government, our people have to face all kinds of problems such as having to become refugees, live in other countries, live in fear, face lack of freedom, become object of scorn. The disgusting thing especially is rape of some women employees by the employer, the sale of some into slavery and the ending up of some in the ruin of their life. The Burmese government, practicing the system of dictatorship, has no sympathy for the people.

In such a situation, the promotion of our own national customs, culture and traditions is very difficult. Whatever it is and wherever you may live, we would like to urge all the Karen people to maintain the characteristics that have made us to exist as a people in this world and show the essence of unity. All the Karen people join hands in unity for maintaining qualities that make us unique as a people, for raising the national dignity and for the security of life.

“Unity of the Karen People Shall Definitely Bring Victory”

Karen National Union  
Supreme Headquarters